

# Court of Civil Appeals

SIXTH DISTRICT

Texarkana, Texas

March 11, 1918.

Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham,  
Austin, Texas.

Dear Mrs. Cunningham:-

I am much interested in your efforts, and those of your associates, to secure for women the right to vote in our primaries. Generally it is an honest conservatism that makes men oppose this demand; but there is an element among them who will oppose you because they are afraid of woman's power and influence at the ballot box. They oppose enfranchising women for the same reason that they oppose disfranchising ignorant and irresponsible foreigners. That class of opponents is beyond the reach of any legitimate influence that women can exercise. But a large majority of men are of a different type, and are governed by better motives. The latter are open to legitimate arguments and suggestions.

I have often endeavored to frame some kind of an argument that was concise and strong that would reach good men who oppose suffrage from good motives. It occurred to me this morning that in talking to the members of the Legislature you might make this suggestion: We are told that this great war is a contest between democracy and autocracy - a fight to preserve the right of self-government to men. It has already cost millions of lives and one hundred billions of dollars, and will surely cost many more lives and many more billions of dollars; yet we think the end we seek is worth the price we must pay. Self-government can be performed only through the exercise of some form of individual voting. If the preservation of democracy to men, which means the

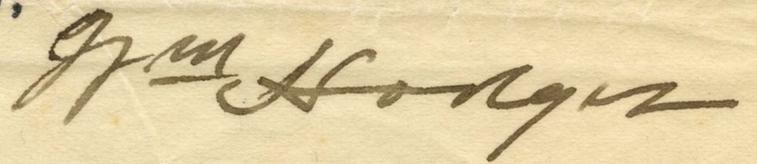
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Mrs. Minnie Fisher Cunningham.

preservation of this right of self-government, is worth all the blood and money it is costing, is not the right of self-government worth something to women? A right that men consider worth dying for surely has some value to women.

I sincerely hope that you and your committee may be successful in having our primary election laws so modified that women can participate in that which occurs during the present year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. M. Hodges".

WH:D